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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001664

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/21/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: FADHILA AWAITS ANSWER FROM SADRISTS, JAFARI, IIP  
ON NATIONAL FRONT IDEA

REF: A. BAGHDAD 452

[B](#). BASRAH 38

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Charles O. Blaha for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

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The "National Front" - Waiting for Answers  
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[1](#)1. (C) Fadhila bloc leader Hassan al-Shammari told PolOffs May 20 that he had recently traveled to Najaf to discuss Fadhila's proposal for a "national front" (ref A) with the Sadrists' political bureau. Despite his urging, al-Shammari said, the Sadrists told him they wanted to remain "independent" for the time being, even if superficially part of the Shi'a coalition. Al-Shammari said he asked them what positive proposals the Sadrists had put forth and challenged them to be constructive if they wanted to be political players in the Iraq. One of their fears about joining the national front, al-Shammari relayed, was that, if successful, it could be a vehicle for Ayad Allawi to become Prime Minister. Al-Shammari said that he had assured the Sadrists that the front was not a vehicle for Allawi but would have a small coordinating committee that would make choices. He said Fadhila had also broached the idea with Ibrahim al-Ja'fari and IIP. "If Ja'fari is convinced, then the Sadrists will follow," he opined. "If we could then get the IIP, we would have all of Tawafuq, Hewar, Iraqiya, the Sadrists, Fadhila, and a number of Shi'a independents."

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Basrah: PM Asks for Opinion from CoM Legal Department  
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[1](#)2. (C) On Basrah, al-Shammari said that Prime Minister Maliki had met with Governor al-Waeli as well as with al-Shammari and several other Fadhila CoR members. Al-Shammari said the Prime Minister was under tremendous pressure from within the Shi'a coalition (i.e., from ISCI, the former SCIRI), causing him to deal with the situation "politically." According to al-Shammari, Maliki referred the question of the legality of the vote of no confidence to the legal department of the Council of Ministers. Al-Shammari shared with PolOffs a copy of a brief he prepared for the legal department on the Governor's behalf arguing that the vote had no legal standing. Al-Shammari said that the Prime Minister, when told that some of the signatures on the vote of no confidence had been obtained under threat, promised he would listen personally to any council member willing to bear witness to this intimidation. Although one of the council members from the INA was in Baghdad and willing to testify to Maliki, al-Shammari continued, Maliki had not received him to date.

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Fadhila Working on Elections Law  
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13. (C) A member of the CoR's legal committee, al-Shammari said that there was no movement in the committee toward drafting an election law, one of the components that would be necessary for provincial elections. However, he said that some individual parties, including Fadhila, were beginning to draft their own proposals, which in Fadhila's case would call for the open list system. Al-Shammari noted that Fadhila's view was that provincial elections should not take place until the security situation had stabilized somewhat.

(Comment: Drafting a comprehensive elections law is a difficult task, and we doubt that Fadhila (or any other party) has advanced far in the drafting process. We will explore ways to ensure those working on this issue have access to technical assistance. End comment.)

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